PLATINVM END

— CHAPTER 16 —
Where the Tears Go

STORY BY **TSUGUMI OHBA** ART BY **TAKESHI OBATA**

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ART BY **TAKESHI OBATA**

TSUGUMI OHBA

I have nothing else to say, so I'm going with this.
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SHH...
HE WENT IN!
!

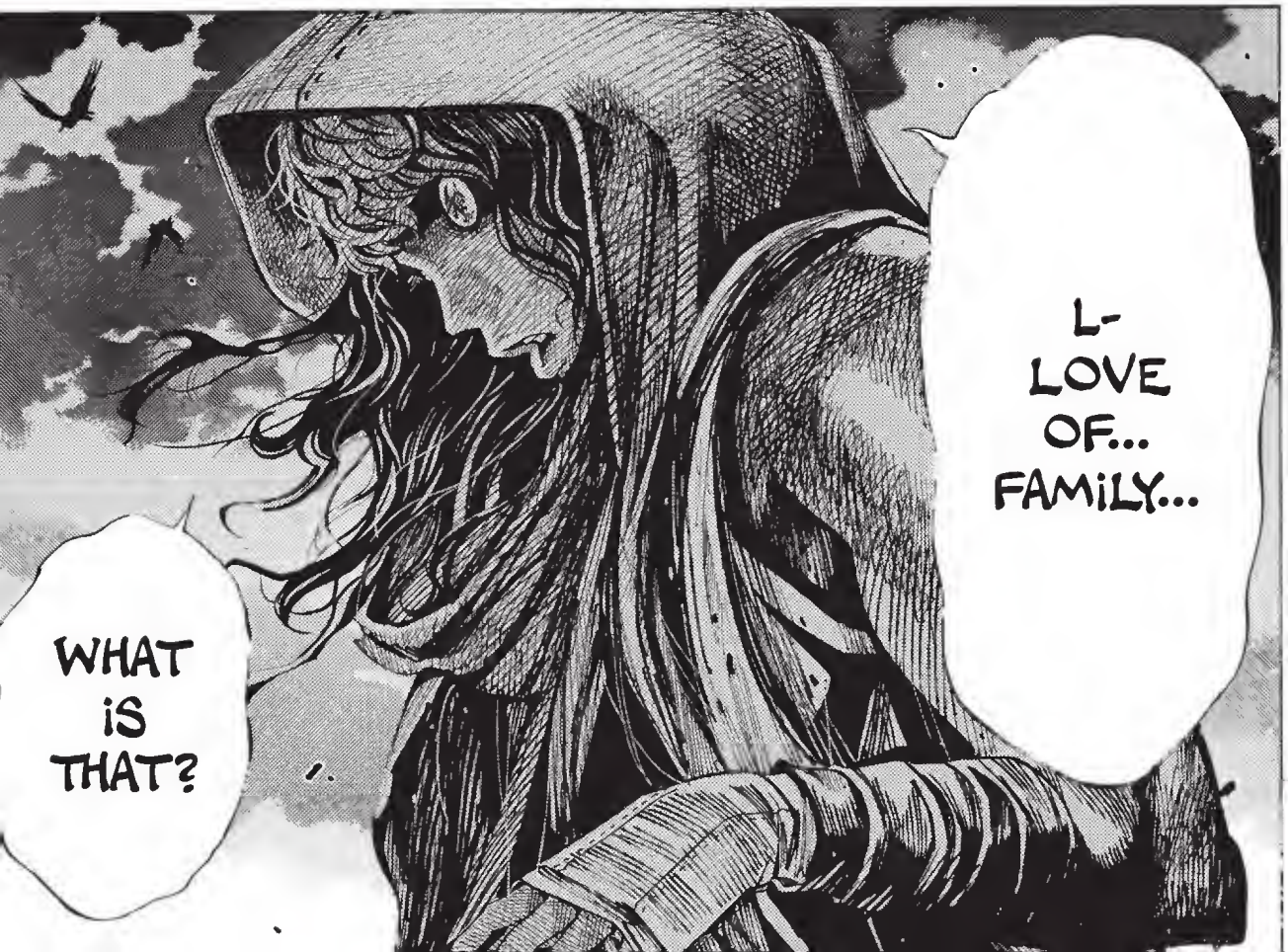
MIRROR HOUSE
!
SHK
MR. MUKAI-DO!
KWING
I'LL GET YOUR DAUGHTER!
GRAB YOUR WIFE AND FLY AROUND INSIDE HERE AS FAST AS YOU CAN!
WHUP
TO SURVIVE!
KWIII
WHY DID YOU COME IN...?

IT'S THE ONLY WAY TO ENSURE ALL FOUR OF US SURVIVE !!
KIII
III
...
I CAN'T SEE THEM ANYMORE ...
FFT
GHAM

WE'VE DONE IT, MISTER POLIMAN!
IT'S THE ONLY OPTION TO ENSURE THAT MUKAIDO ISN'T KILLED...
...BUT HE *MUST* BE STUPID, JOINING HIM IN THERE.
WE CAN JUST WAIT FOR THEM TO TIRE AND STOP FLYING.
YES. I DIDN'T IMAGINE MUKAIDO WOULD JUST WALK RIGHT IN THERE.
THE OTHER IDIOT, SURE...
THAT SETTLES IT.
W-WHY DID MUKAI-DO DO THAT...?
...

IT MUST BE... LOVE OF FAMILY.

FAMILY ...
LOVE...


L- LOVE OF... FAMILY...
WHAT IS THAT?

I CAN'T LOSE MY COOL IN FRONT OF M-MISTER POLIMAN...
OH NO ...
I FEEL SO... IRRITATED ...
WHAT?
URRGH!
AUGH!
...
HFF!
HFF!
MIRROR HOUSE
WAIT, I GUESS YOU'RE ALL WHITE TO BEGIN WITH.
YOU'RE MY TYPE OF GIRL, ANGEL... BUT YOU'RE LOOKING PALE.
MIRAI...

AND NOW IT'S JUST A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE THAT PARTNER OF YOURS PERISHES... IT'S FUNNY, REALLY.
WASN'T THAT IT?
YOU WERE GOING TO HAVE YOUR PARTNER KILL ME?
YOU SAID YOU'D BE DELIGHTED WHEN I DIED, RIGHT?

...BUT YOU DON'T EVEN FEEL LIKE ARGUING TODAY?
WHAT'S WRONG? I KNOW YOU ANGELS CAN'T INTERFERE DIRECTLY...

FWFF...
Y-YOU'RE LEAVING?
OF COURSE. I DON'T NEED TO WAIT AROUND HERE FOR THEM TO STOP. AND I DON'T WANT TO EXPOSE MYSELF IN YOUR PRESENCE.
LET ME KNOW WHEN THEY STOP, AND I'LL FINISH THEM WITH WHITE ARROWS.
ALL RIGHT, HAJIME.
MIRROR HOUSE
D-DO YOU THINK... THAT I WOULD TURN MY ARROWS... ON YOU?
H-HE'S SO COOL!
WHOA... SUCH CRAFTY STRATE-GY...
THAT MEANS LIMITING EXPOSURE TO OTHER GOD CANDIDATES.
ALL POSSIBILITIES MUST BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT, NO?
Y-YES, SIR.
JUST LET ME KNOW.
SHWA

KWII
IIIII
IIII

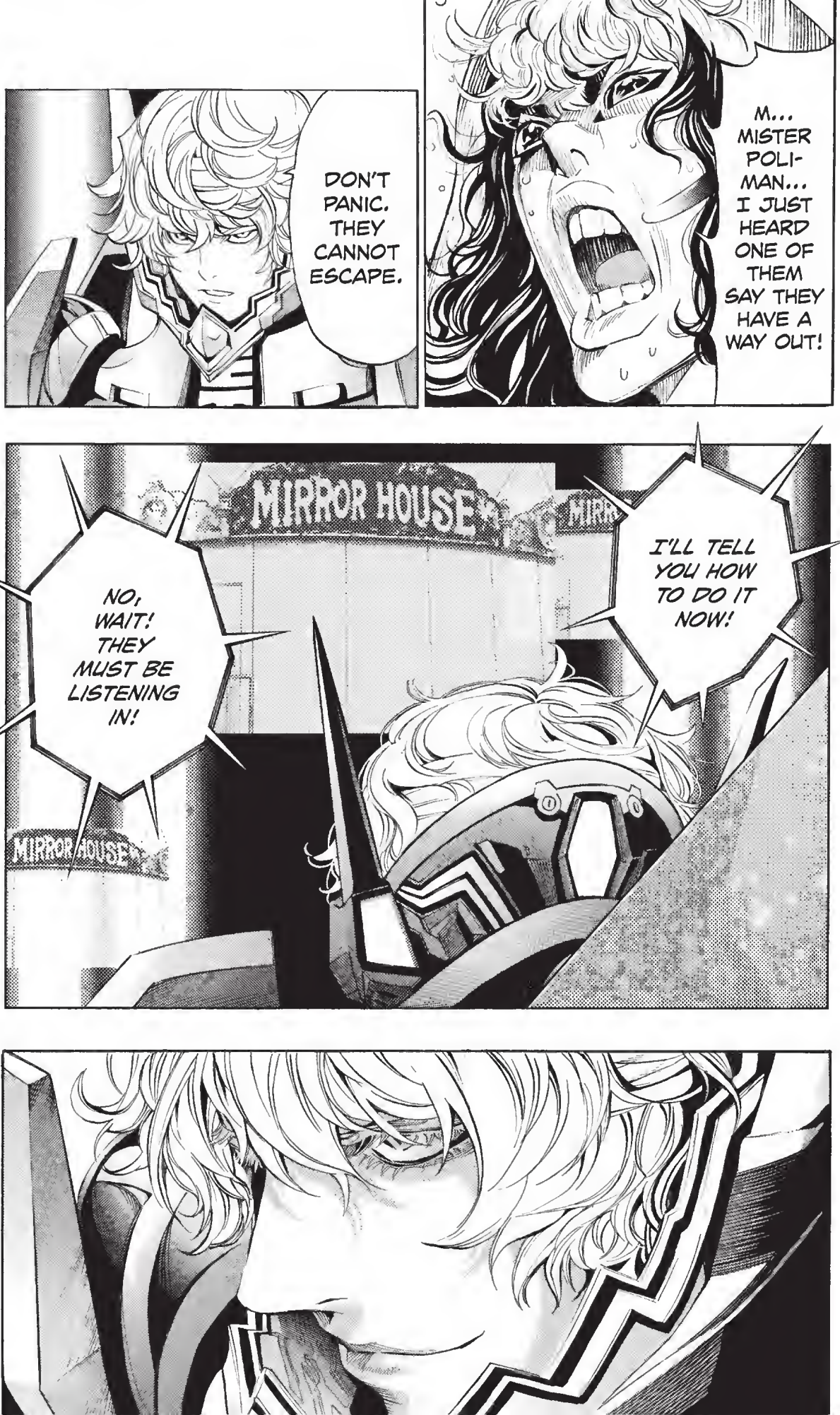
DO YOU HAVE A PLAN?
KIIIII
IIII
NO, I DON'T!
Y-YOU DON'T?
WAIT...
IT'S CRUCIAL THAT WE ALL SURVIVE! YOU CAN'T DO ANYTHING IF YOU DIE FIRST!
IIII
THAT INCLUDES COMING UP WITH AN ESCAPE PLAN!
AS LONG AS WE'RE ALIVE AND HAVE OPTIONS, WE HAVE TO MAKE USE OF THEM!!
T-TRUE, BUT... MY STAMINA'S NOT GOING TO HOLD OUT FOREVER...

IN-DEED.
THEY REALLY HAVE NO PLAN.
TAK
HE COULD HAVE LIVED AS LONG AS HE DIDN'T FOLLOW MUKAIDO INSIDE.
TAK
TAK
SHRK
TING
KAW
HOW LONG ...
...WILL THEY LAST?
KAW
KAW
SHRK
TING
WHOOOO

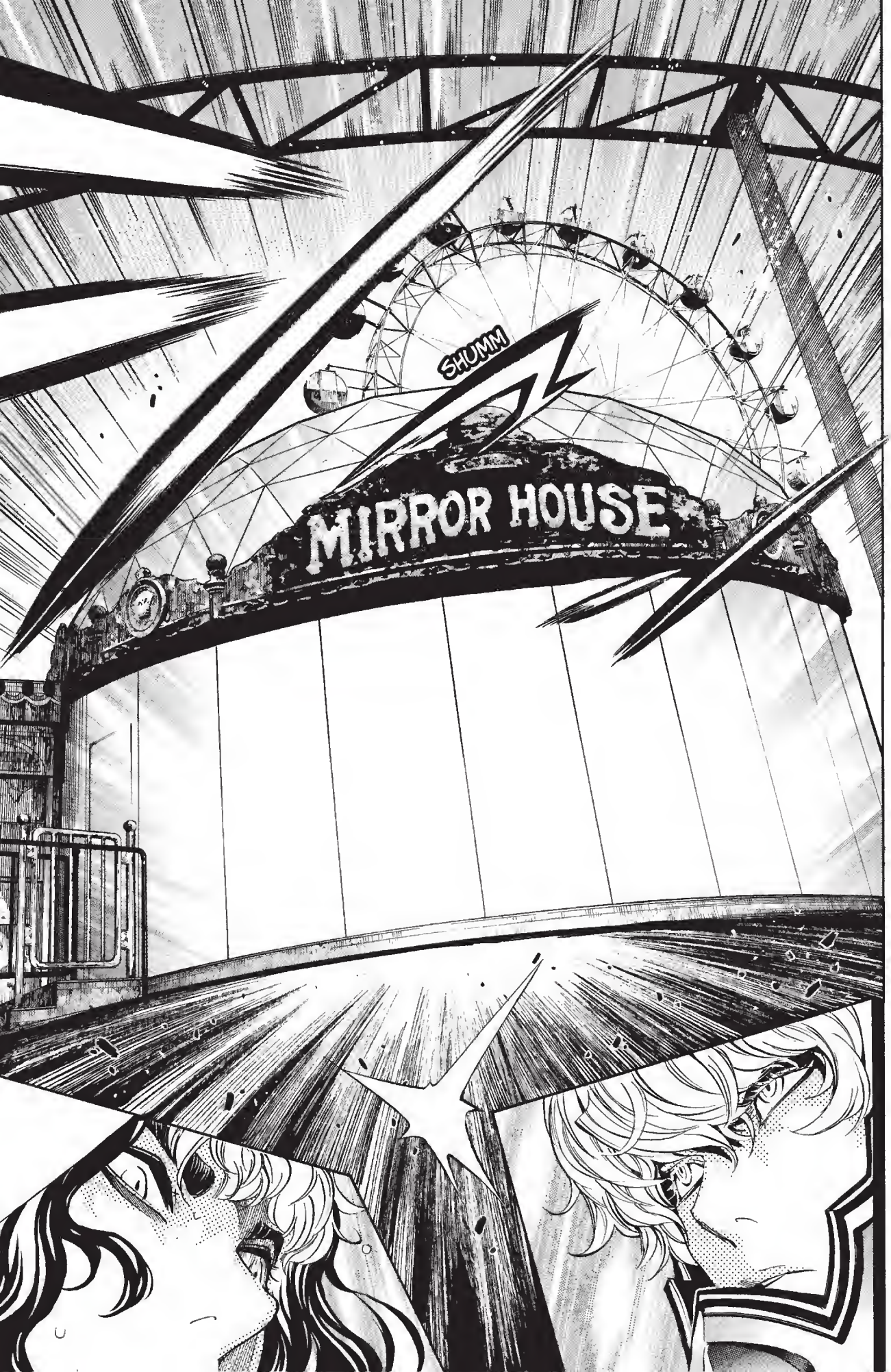
KWIIII
HOW LONG HAS IT BEEN...?
WHEN YOU FLY AT TOP SPEED, IT'S HARD TO GET A SENSE OF TIME.
IIII
THERE MUST BE A WAY...
SO WHAT DO I DO...?
AT SOME POINT, I'LL COME TO A STOP.
I CERTAINLY CAN'T FLY LIKE THIS FOREVER.
II
SHUR ガッ
SHUR ガッ
TUG ギュッ
...

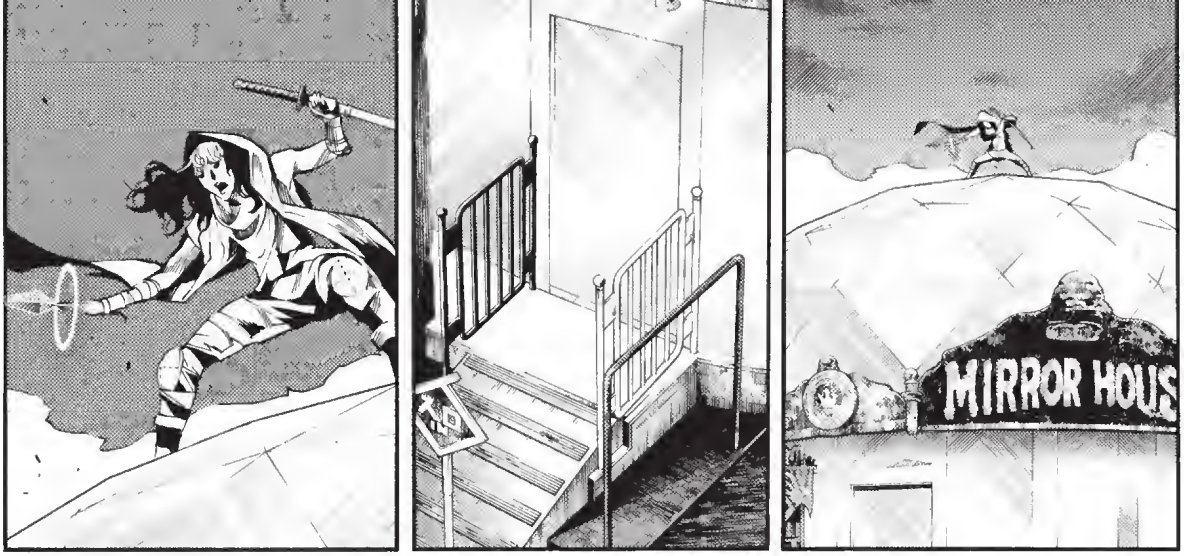
IT'S OKAY... DON'T BE SCARED.
...
TUG
KWIII
I GUESS... I CAN TRY...
MR. MUKAI-DO!
III
?!
III

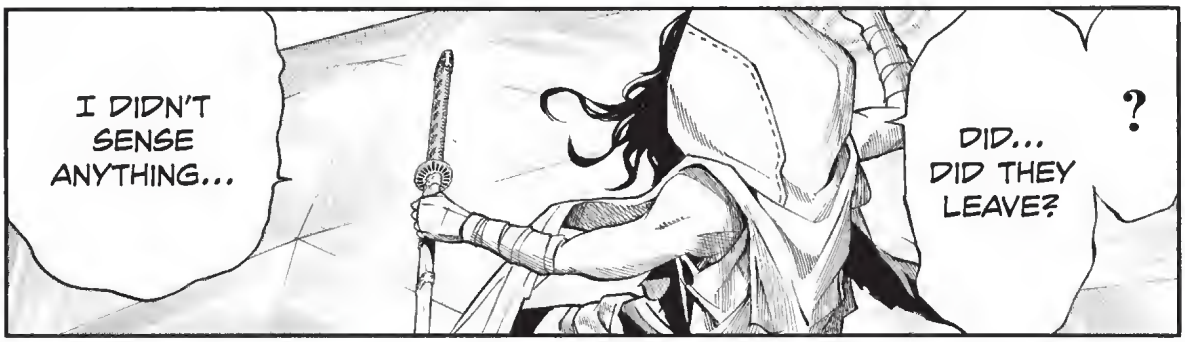
WE MIGHT HAVE A WAY OUT!
!
BOOM
!
!
REALLY?
OR IS IT A LIE?
HMM ...
HE DID SAY "MIGHT HAVE."

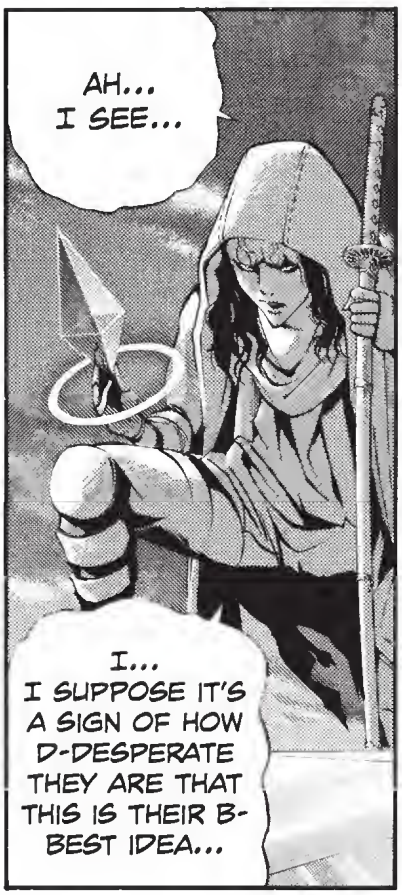

M... MISTER POLI-MAN... I JUST HEARD ONE OF THEM SAY THEY HAVE A WAY OUT!
DON'T PANIC. THEY CANNOT ESCAPE.
MIRROR HOUSE
MIRR
I'LL TELL YOU HOW TO DO IT NOW!
NO, WAIT! THEY MUST BE LISTENING IN!
MIRROR HOUSE

...THEN HE WON'T BE ABLE TO HEAR US IF WE LEAVE!
KIII
IF HE CAN HEAR WHAT WE'RE SAYING NOW...
BUT IF THEY CAN HEAR US, THEN IT MIGHT MAKE IT EASIER FOR METRO-POLIMAN TO FIGURE OUT!
OR YOUR WIFE, OR NANAKA ...
IIIII
OH! I SEE...
...
THAT MAKES SENSE ...
TO FIGURE OUT?
LEAVE? BUT HOW ...?!
ALL RIGHT, LET'S LEAVE.
III
GOT IT! LET'S GO!


SHUMM
MIRROR HOUSE

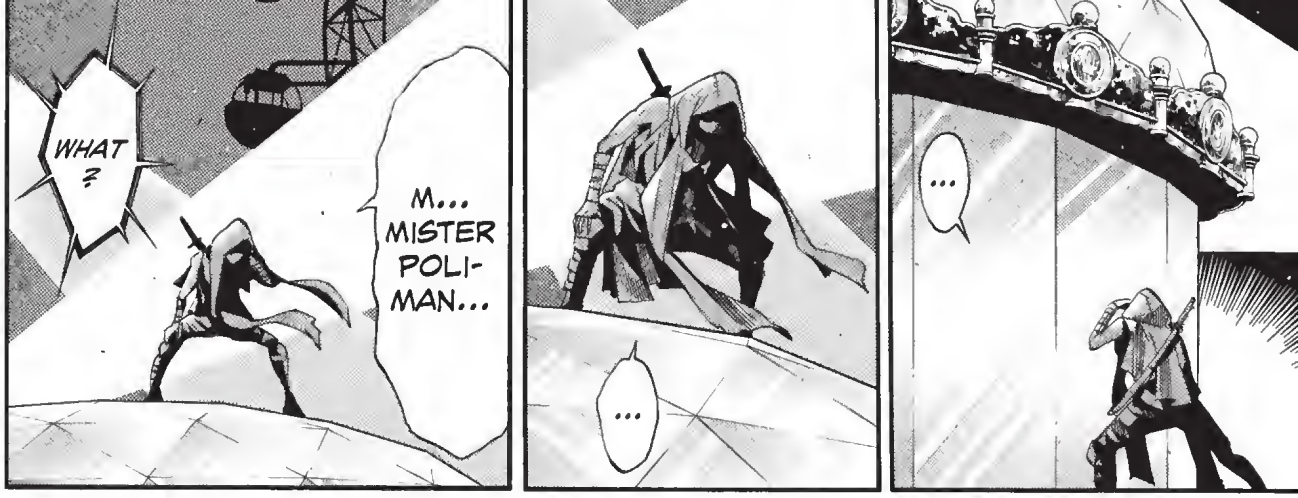

MIRROR HOUS

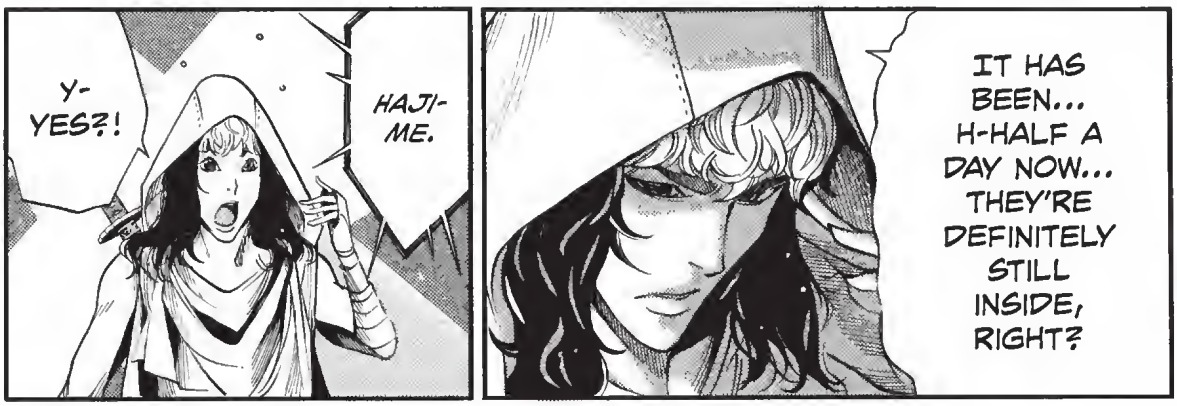

I DIDN'T SENSE ANYTHING...
DID... DID THEY LEAVE?
?

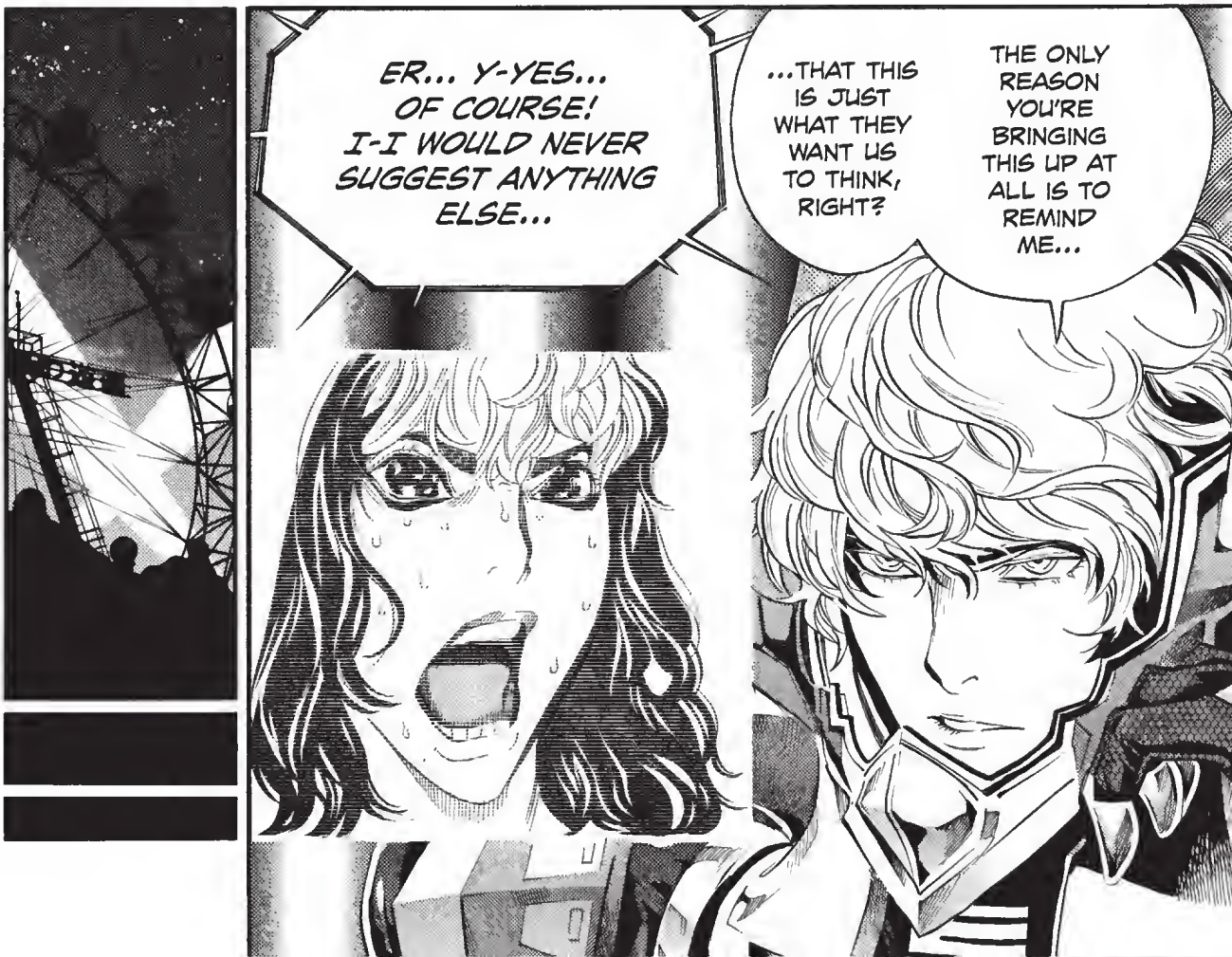

AH... I SEE...
I... I SUPPOSE IT'S A SIGN OF HOW D-DESPERATE THEY ARE THAT THIS IS THEIR B-BEST IDEA...

HA HA HA! SO BECAUSE WE CAN'T SEE THEM, THEY THINK THEY CAN PRETEND TO HAVE ESCAPED IF THEY JUST STAY QUIET?!
WHAT A CRUDE BIT OF CHILD'S PLAY!!

CLACK
CLACK
CLACK
...
THAT'S RIGHT. NOW LISTEN TO ME. UNTIL I KILL THEM, DO NOT ATTEMPT TO CONFIRM IF THEY ARE INSIDE.
JUST DON'T OPEN THE DOOR.
THIS IS INTRIGUING.
IN THIS SITUATION, I AM THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN SENSE IF NANATO MUKAIDO IS INSIDE THE BUILDING.
AND ONLY YOU CAN SENSE MIRAI KAKEHASHI.


WHAT?
M... MISTER POLI-MAN...
...
...


Y-YES?!
HAJI-ME.
IT HAS BEEN... H-HALF A DAY NOW... THEY'RE DEFINITELY STILL INSIDE, RIGHT?


ER... Y-YES... OF COURSE! I-I WOULD NEVER SUGGEST ANYTHING ELSE...
...THAT THIS IS JUST WHAT THEY WANT US TO THINK, RIGHT?
THE ONLY REASON YOU'RE BRINGING THIS UP AT ALL IS TO REMIND ME...

ZSH
ZSH
SNIFF
...
SNIFF
...
I DO NOT SEE THEIR ANGELS ANYWHERE...
WHAT ?
MISTER POLIMAN.
Y-YES, SIR! I... I JUST WANTED TO REPORT...
IF THEY JUST WANT TO CONVINCE US THEY'RE NOT INSIDE, THEIR ANGELS WILL ASSIST IN THE ILLUSION.
...

WHOOO
YEAH.
OOHH
IF IT WAS JUST THAT HAJIME FELLOW, HE MIGHT NOT HAVE FIGURED IT OUT...
BUT I CAN'T TELL WHAT BALTA IS THINKING.
YEAH. HE DOESN'T CARE THAT WE'VE MOVED. WE'RE RIGHT HERE, BUT HE'S NOT LOOKING FOR US.

KNIII
OH, MIRAI...
MIRAI'S INSIDE, DESPERATELY THINKING OF A WAY TO GET OUT...
III
THERE MUST BE ANOTHER WAY...
BUT IT WILL BE HARD TO GET THE ANSWER FROM THEM...
III
IF THEY LOCKED MR. MUKAIDO'S WIFE AND DAUGHTER IN HERE, THEY MUST KNOW HOW TO GET OUT.
IF I CAN JUST SAVE AYA AND THE KIDS...
THIS IS BAD... THE PAIN IS GETTING WORSE, AND I CAN'T TAKE MY MEDICATION... HOW MUCH LONGER CAN I LAST?

IT'S... QUITE RE-MARK-ABLE.
AND THEY'VE BEEN IN FOR HOURS AND HOURS... WITHOUT W-WATER...
IT... IT'S SEALED INSIDE! IT M-MUST BE HOT IN THERE.
M... MISTER POLIMAN.
AGAIN? WHAT IS IT?!
OF COURSE THEY'RE DESPERATE.
IF THEY STOP, THEY DIE.
Y-YES, SIR.
...
...
CHIRP チュン
チュン CHIRP
MIRROR HOUSE

M-MISTER POLIMAN, THINKING OF WATER G-GAVE ME AN IDEA...
WHAT IS IT NOW?
W-WHAT IF WE POURED IN WATER OR CONCRETE TO F-FINISH THEM OFF...?
...
CREATING AN OPENING TO DO THAT MIGHT ONLY GIVE THEM AN OPPORTUNITY TO BREAK FREE...
ISN'T THAT RIGHT?
Y-YES... OF COURSE...
OKAY, HAJIME ...
TAP
TAP
I NEED YOU TO BEHAVE. I KNOW IT'S BORING, BUT WE ARE NOT CONNECTED SO THAT YOU CAN CHAT WITH ME WHENEVER YOU FEEL LIKE IT.
Y-YOU ARE CORRECT, SIR...
LISTEN. THEY ARE INSIDE.
ONLY CONTACT ME IF THEY STOP OR SOMETHING CHANGES.
FWAP
TAK
TAK
CLK

プシュウウ
PSHHHHT
I'M GOING TO GET SOME REST.
ONLY IF THEY STOP OR SOMETHING HAPPENS. GOT THAT?
BEEP
Y-YES...
ニュ
VSSH
HAJIME SOKOTANI... EVEN MORE USELESS THAN I THOUGHT.
UWEE
I'LL GET RID OF HIM AS SOON AS MUKAIDO'S TEAM IS GONE.
INDEED.
プシュウウ
PSHHHH

URGH ...
ジ ジ ジ... ZZZT...
ジ... ジ... ZT... ZT...
TONK
...
HUFF!
MY HEAD'S ABOUT TO BURST ...
ヨロ! WOBL...
HUFF!

CHIRP
CHIRP
SAKI...
HAVE YOU BEEN WAITING HERE ALL NIGHT?
THEY HAVEN'T... COME BACK.
AND THEY'RE NOT MESSAGING BACK.
I'M SURE THEY'RE FIGHTING FOR THEIR LIVES RIGHT NOW...
THEY MUST STILL BE ALIVE.
KAKE-HASHI...
MR. MUKAIDO AND HIS FAMILY...

IT'S OKAY, SAKI...
I'LL DO MY BEST TO BECOME A FIRST-RANK ANGEL...
AND I'M NOT ABLE TO DO A THING TO HELP THEM.
I'M GOING TO THEM. I CAN'T STAY HERE.
THANK YOU, REVEL.
IT'S ALL RIGHT.
NO, SAKI!
THEY'LL KILL YOU!!
I'LL FIGHT WITH-OUT WINGS ...
SAKI ... ...

I FEEL THE SAME WAY...
I KNOW!
BUT AT THIS RATE ...
YOU'RE ACTING THE SAME DESPERATE WAY YOU DID WHEN YOU WALKED INTO THE OCEAN!
YOU'VE LOST CONFIDENCE IN YOUR ABILITY! YOU'RE MAKING A MISTAKE!!
TONK
IF ONLY I WERE A FIRST-RANK ANGEL, I COULD GIVE YOU WINGS... AND HOPE.
BUT I'M JUST NOT GOOD ENOUGH ...
ROLL...
I'M SORRY, SAKI... SORRY YOU HAVE A WORTHLESS ANGEL...
REV-EL ...
HUH?
YOU'RE... CRYING...
R... REVEL?

DRIP
DRIP
DRIP
DRIP
WAIT... THAT DOESN'T MAKE SENSE... ANGELS DON'T SHED TEARS...
THE ANGELIC TEXTS CLAIMED THAT IT WAS ONLY HUMANS WHO SHED TEARS FOR THE SAKE OF OTHERS...
!
WAIT... THESE ARE...

HUFF!
KN!!!!!
HUFF!
!!!!!
HUFF!
CAN'T FOCUS...
DAMN! MY SIGHT IS BLURRING...
HUFF!
HUFF!
!!!!!
HUFF!
HUFF!
AYA, NANAKA... I'M SORRY...
UNLESS WE GET A MIRACLE... THIS IS IT...
HUFF!
HUFF!
...AND NOW I FEEL LIKE BEGGING GOD BEFORE I DIE...
AN ANGEL BROUGHT ME TO THIS POINT...
IT'S IRONIC...

REVEL
...
REVEL.
GOD...
!

THERE IS MERELY NO PRECEDENT.
NO ANGEL HAS DONE THIS BEFORE NOW.
I AM UNFIT TO BE AN ANGEL.
Y-YES...
YOU HAVE SHED TEARS.
YOU ARE THE FIRST ANGEL TO CRY FOR THE SAKE OF A HUMAN BEING.
YOU HAVE BECOME ABLE TO UNDERSTAND AND EMPATHIZE WITH HUMAN FEELINGS.
YOU NOW HAVE FIRST RANK AND A NEW TITLE.
HUMAN FEELINGS?

REVEL, ANGEL OF EMOTION...
KIIIIII
IIIII
IIIII

ANGEL OF EMOTION ...
I'M... FIRST RANK?
TAKE IT, SAKI.
SAKI
IT'S YOUR WINGS.
RING!
SHWA

SHAAAA
REVEL ...
LET'S GO TO MIRAI AND MUKAIDO!
LET'S GO, SAKI!
AAA
YES!
SHWAA
AAA

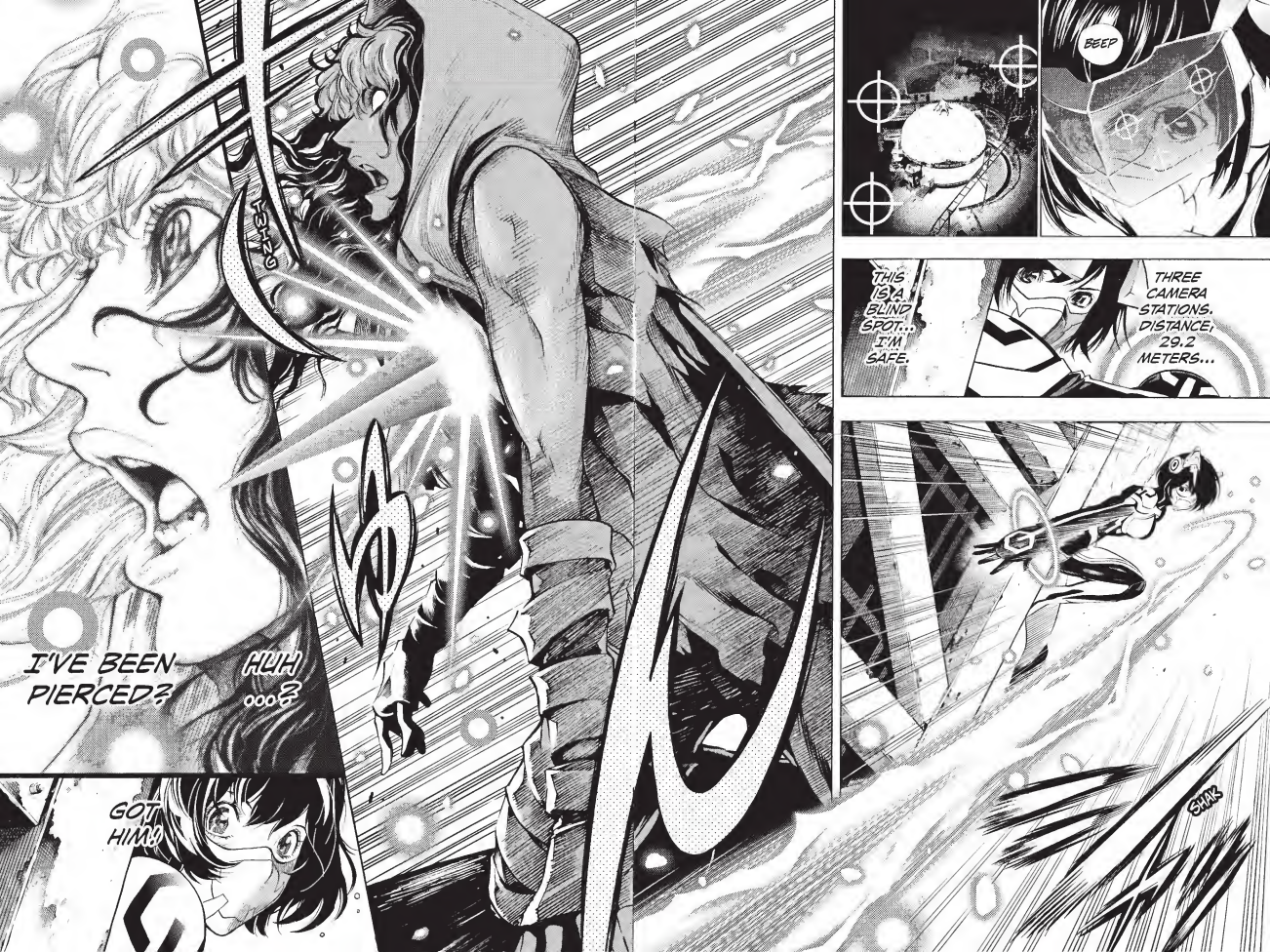
OH.
!
IIII
SAKI!
VOOM

WHAT'S THE SITUATION, BARET?
WELL ...
YOU DID IT, REVEL!
HEH HEH!
MY, MY, LOOKS LIKE THE WHOLE GROUP IS HERE.
!
WHOO
BALTA!

OH, AND REVEL...
...CONGRATS ON YOUR PROMOTION.
GREAT, ANOTHER CREEP...
BALTA, ANGEL OF INTUITION...
WHAT DO YOU INTEND TO DO?
I DECIDE HOW TO ACT ON MY OWN, FOLLOWING MY INTUITION.
AND MY HUNCH SAYS...
!
THE NEW ARRIVAL HOLDS THE KEY TO EVERYTHING.

I... WILL...
WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?
I SUPPOSE IT MEANS YOU SHOULD DO AS YOU WILL.
!
SAKI, I'M SURE METRO-POLIMAN HAS HIM UNDER THE CONTROL OF A RED ARROW ALREADY!
IT'S ONLY GOING TO TIP HIM OFF!
KWING

...
GO AHEAD, SAKI. SHOOT HIM IF YOU WANT TO.
JUST BE CAREFUL OF ANY CAMERAS METROPOLIMAN MIGHT BE USING TO WATCH.
WHAT WILL HAPPEN NEXT?
HEH ...
GR
RGGG
KSHAK
CAMERA DETECTION APP, ON.
GRRN
NGG
MIRROR HOU


BEEP
THIS IS A BLIND SPOT... I'M SAFE.
THREE CAMERA STATIONS. DISTANCE: 29.2 METERS...
SHAK
TWING
I'VE BEEN PIERCED?
HUH ...?
GOT HIM!

BA-BUMP
ドクン
BUT... WHO DID IT...?
BA-BUMP
ドクン
WHO ...
WHO ...?
BA-BUMP
BA-BUMP

THIS FEELING!
THIS FEELING...
TINGLE
TINGLE
I LOVE THAT GIRL... WITH THE CAT EARS!!!
IT'S LOVE...!
TINGLE
TINGLE
TINGLE

I LOVE
...
Mooo
MISTER
POLIMAN
ooo

I... I AM... MISTER POLIMAN'S SERVANT...
GAH... NO! I CAN'T...
ア!! ア!!
HRRG
MIS-TER POLI-MAN IS MY... !!
AAAAHH!
WHAT'S GOING ON?
TO BE CONTINUED...